

Assembly Bills Set Policy for State Employees

By VINCENT THOMAS
Assemblyman, 68th District.

How to get along with employees is just as big a problem for government as it is for private industry. The successful operation of any public agency is just as much dependent upon the ability, morale, and willingness to work of its employees as it is a pickle factory.

Public opinion, however, seems to distinguish an important difference between government and private employment. That is with respect to the right to strike. It seems to be fairly commonly accepted that public employees, in the majority of instances, should not have the right to strike. But beyond that, there is mostly public silence on other labor-management factors in governmental employment.

erations until recently have tended to obscure certain problems, such as the refusal of some public agencies to permit their employees to join, or not to join, organizations of their own choosing. Various associations of public employees have developed different methods of assisting their members in dealing with their employing agencies. Labor unions have also been active in the field, and in some segments, are dominant.

At our 1961 session, two bills to establish policy, and set controls on employee-employer relations in all California public agencies were introduced. One passed and became law. The second proved controversial, and was referred to interim study. Recently, the Assembly committee on civil service and state personnel held another in a series of hearings on this second measure.

CIVIL SERVICE laws, "merit systems" for selection and retention of employees, and other systems of acquiring job tenure have been in existence for a great many years. Their op-

THE BILL which did become law went into effect in September 1961. It provides that public employees have the right to form, join and participate in employee organizations of their own choosing to represent them in all job matters, and have the right to refuse to join such groups, and to represent themselves personally.

The law does not supercede civil service, or other forms of merit systems. It provides that such employee organizations have the right to represent their members, and that public agencies must confer and deal with them. It prohibits coercion, either by employing agency, or by employee organization, of employees, in joining, or not joining. It specifically states that public employees are not covered by Labor Code provisions relating to collective bargaining.

THE BILL still being studied went much further. As introduced, it would set up, in effect, a "little National Labor Relations Board," with provision for formal representations of employees, settlement of "negotiations," and arbitration of disputes. It would create a "Public Employment Relations Control Agency," complete with a Board to run it.

The bill was sponsored by the state employees association, and supported by the leagues of city and county employee associations. It was opposed by the league of cities, the county supervisors, and the conference of employer associations, representing private employers. Certain labor unions, and groups of certain types of public employees, were critical of many of its specific provisions, though not of its main purpose. Many spokesmen said that the law which did not pass was sufficient, and could be later improved, if it proved necessary.

Major changes have been made in the proposed bill. Agencies with less than 25 employees, school districts, transit authorities, and fire fighters would now be exempt. But it is apparent that the bill is still in considerable dispute.

MWD Sets New Mark For Water

An all-time record for water deliveries by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California was made on Aug. 9, when the district delivered 1,315,900,000 gallons of water to the various cities and areas within the district's six-county service area.

The announcement was made by Robert A. Skinner, general manager and chief engineer of the district, which imports water from the Colorado River through the giant Colorado River Aqueduct.

"This would be enough water to cover more than 4,000 acres of land with water one foot deep," Skinner said.

THE DISTRICT official said that approximately two-thirds of this water was taken for immediate consumptive use and that the remaining third was used to help replenish underground basins in Los Angeles and Orange Counties and for agricultural use.

Skinner pointed out that it was just two years ago that the Colorado River Aqueduct was brought to its full capacity of more than one billion gallons of water a day. This was accomplished by a \$220 million aqueduct expansion program started in 1952.

"Had it not been for the foresight of the District's board of directors in authorizing this program, we would not be able to meet the demands for water that now exist," Skinner declared.

Missouri Picnic

Annual Missouri picnic sponsored by the Long Beach Missouri Society will be held in Bixby Park in Long Beach in Sunday, Aug. 26. A program is scheduled from 12:45 to 4 p.m.

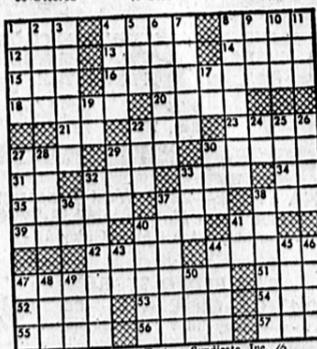
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

- 1-Crimean
- 4-Agreement
- 8-Ready
- 12-Exist
- 13-Ofs of Celebes
- 14-In sheltered side
- 16-Woodworker
- 18-Concise
- 20-Depression
- 21-Babylonian deity
- 22-In favor of
- 23-Had
- 27-Beverage
- 28-Metal
- 30-To depart
- 31-Japanese measure
- 32-Pelvic
- 33-To fasten
- 34-Indefinite article
- 35-Brazilian macaw
- 37-To knock
- 38-Nahoor sheen
- 39-Tibetan priest
- 40-To allow
- 41-Sear
- 42-To post
- 44-To maintain
- 47-To expel
- 51-Pedal diast
- 52-Grain
- 53-Short jacket
- 54-Greek letter
- 55-To sow
- 56-7n lease
- 57-Man's nickname

DOWN

- 1-Absorbed
- 2-Great Lake
- 3-Relative amount
- 4-State of speed
- 5-Collection of facts
- 6-Unbroken circle
- 7-Small candle



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